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Goddard Space Flight Center
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Wallops Island, VA 23337-5099

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NASA WALLOPS LOCATES HISTORICAL AMMUNITION SITES

The NASA Wallops Flight Facility is taking steps to notify and protect the public from potential unexploded ordnance dating back to when the U.S. Navy conducted operations at the site in the 1950s.

Recently studied historical archives show that unexploded ordnance items and live munitions may remain on U.S. Government property at the NASA Visitor Center and two other locations at Wallops.

The discovery of potential ammunition hazards is part of Wallops' on-going efforts to protect the local environment and provide public safety for activities that took place years ago as well as current activities at the Facility. To date, only limited amounts of ammunition have been identified. However, the potential may exist for more items to be present.

The NASA Visitor Center will be closed January 30 through February 24. During this four-week period Department of Defense certified munitions experts will survey and remove any buried ammunition that may remain from when the U.S. Navy used the area as a firing range for machine guns.

"Although people do not normally walk in the area that is being searched by the marsh at the Visitor Center, we want our visitors to feel and be completely safe," said Dr. John Campbell, senior manager at Wallops. "And, although no live munitions have been found at the site, we want to insure the safety of our visitors," he added.

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The activity at the site is not expected to impact traffic on Virginia Route 175 adjacent to the Visitor Center. The grounds will reopen for public use once the clearing activity is complete.

In addition to the site at the Visitor Center, two other locations may contain unexploded ordnance and live munitions. They are the Main Base Boat Basin located on Jenneys Gut off of Mosquito Creek and the north end of Wallops Island.

To protect the public from inadvertently trespassing on the U.S. Government property and the potential unexploded ordnance at the Boat Basin and the north end of Wallops Island, new signs clearly marking the property have been posted on land, beaches and waterways.

The restrictions do not affect land surrounding Wallops Island that is owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia and managed by the Virginia Marine Resource Commission.

A Fact Sheet providing more information on the potential of unexploded ordnance and munitions at Wallops and identifying the U.S. Government property at Wallops is available on the Internet at:

www.wff.nasa.gov/code250/pdf/Wallops_Fact_Sht.pdf

In addition, the Fact Sheet is available by calling 757-824-1139 and it will be distributed to various locations in the Town of Chincoteague.